



SPORT INTEGRITY
AUSTRALIA

DATA SCOUTS

AT AUSTRALIAN SPORTING EVENTS

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a silver smartphone. The person is wearing a red hoodie. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a crowd of people at a sporting event.

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Unofficial data scouts

are employed by data companies and Wagering Service Providers (WSP) to covertly collect and transmit live scores or statistics from sporting events. WSPs or 'bookies', use this information to offer betting options to their customers.



Data scouts can be seen on the sidelines of Australian sporting events, from the professional leagues down to community level matches. If you see someone at a match standing by themselves, talking into a headset or tapping out each play on their phone, there is a good chance they are an unofficial data scout.

In some cases, betting is only available on a competition or event because data-scouts are able to collect and transmit relevant data and statistics for the use of offshore bookies. The creation of these offshore markets increases the integrity risk to Australian sport and its participants.

'Why Australia's local soccer leagues are attracting international gamblers' - *The Age*

The Age newspaper reported that betting markets on almost 300 Australian soccer matches were featured on offshore wagering websites. In fact, far more matches were offered on Australian soccer matches than matches in any other country.

Several markets were on community level games that were described as 'closer to a kickaround with friends than the European Champions League'. A UK based gambler believed that the rarity of match-fixing in Australia and its strong integrity laws give overseas wagering providers confidence in the Australian product, even at an amateur level.

The offshore wagering markets are facilitated by official and unofficial sports data collected by data scouts attending the matches. Official data is collected through formal data partnerships between sports and data providers, where unofficial data is covertly collected outside of the sport's authorisation or oversight.

The head of legal at the players' union, Professional Football Australia, believes that betting on amateur games leaves players, club personnel and officials at a grassroots level vulnerable to dangerous influences, and that sport needs to develop bespoke education for all players, not only those who reach the professional level.

[Betting on local soccer matches common as data scouts roam the sidelines \(*theage.com.au*\)](#)



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

! Australian sports and law enforcement agencies have very little oversight and visibility of offshore wagering markets. This makes it difficult to monitor and detect possible cases of match manipulation

! Offshore wagering companies offer higher integrity risk bet types that have not been authorised by Australian sports – for example markets on amateur level events and youth leagues

! Amateur athletes may be more vulnerable to corrupt approaches from match fixers due to their lower salary and less scrutiny of their events

! Unlike WSPs licenced in Australia, there is NO requirement for offshore wagering providers to share suspicious wagering activity with Australian sports, gambling regulators or law enforcement bodies

! Corrupt data scouts could manipulate sports data by delaying score updates to allow gamblers to place a bet on a known outcome, or fabricate events which do not affect the final match results but provide an advantage in spot-betting

HOW CAN SPORTS LOWER THEIR RISKS?

- !** Implement a competition manipulation and sports wagering policy binding participants at appropriate levels of the sport
- !** Implement education and awareness programs to all participants, focusing on rules, identification and reporting issues of concern, such as data scouts.
- !** Enter into information sharing and integrity agreements with WSPs and sports data providers
- !** Develop and implement a data-scouting policy to cover your sports events and competitions.
- !** Where possible, include ticketing or venue entry conditions that allow you to evict data scouts
- !** If you see unofficial data scouts at your sport:
 - Ask them to leave
 - Report it to your National Sporting Organisation and Sport Integrity Australia.

For additional information or assistance in developing or implementing these strategies contact Sport Integrity Australia.

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